

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 299156

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ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 TRSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 /074 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/AND:ASCFULLER

APPROVED BY ARA/AND:ASCFULLER

ARA:GLISTER (INFO)

D/HA:MSPEAR (INFO)

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R 090144Z DEC 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LIMA

UNCLAS STATE 299156

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, MASS, PE

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING

1. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CAMPAIGN FOR ABOLITION OF TORTURE (CAT), LONDON, HAS SENT OUT "URGENT ACTION" CIRCULAR DATED NOV 26, 1976, ON JOSE ONA MEONO, LABOR LAWYER ON HUNGER STRIKE AGAINST DETENTION BY GOP. FULL TEXT FOLLOWS. PLEASE REPORT AS INFORMATION DEVELOPED.

2. NUMBERED UA 132/76, CIRCULAR READS:

A. QUOTE SR. JOSE ONA MEONO, A LAWYER AND LEGAL ADVISOR OF TRADE UNIONS, WAS RELEASED IN A GENERAL AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT FRANCISCO BERMUDEZ ON 30 APRIL 1976. HE WAS ONE OF FOUR LAWYERS WHO WORKED FOR MAJOR TRADE UNIONS IN THE COUNTRY AND WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED INCOMMUNICADO WITHOUT CHARGES FOR OVER FOUR MONTHS. THE ONLY REASON FOR THEIR ARREST WAS THEIR PROFESSIONAL WORK WITH THE TRADE UNIONS, WHICH WERE, AND ARE, IN CONFLICT WITH THE GOVERNMENT. SR. ONA MEONO AND THE OTHER ARRESTED LAWYERS HAD BEEN ADOPTED BY AI AS PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 299156

B. AFTER HIS RELEASE, SR. ONA MEONO RE-ASSUMED HIS PROFESSIONAL WORK. ON 2 NOVEMBER 1976, HE WAS RE-ARRESTED AT HIS

OFFICE. AGAIN, FORMAL CHARGES HAVE NOT BEEN MADE. HE IS HELD AT RIMA PRISON IN LIMA.

C. SR. ONA MEONO HAS BEEN ON HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST HIS RENEWED DETENTION SINCE HIS RE-ARREST. AFTER 20 DAYS OF HIS HUNGER STRIKE, HE IS REPORTED TO BE IN A WEAK CONDITION. HIS ARREST IS CLEARLY RELATED TO ARRESTS OF OVER 200 LEADING TRADE UNIONISTS IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER THIS YEAR, FROM THE FISHING, MINING AND AGRICULTURAL TRADE UNIONS. SR. ONA MEONO IS AN ADVISOR TO THE METALWORKERS' FEDERATION.

D. AI IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT OF SR. ONA MEONO, APPARENTLY BASED ONLY ON HIS PERFORMANCE OF PROFESSIONAL DUTIES AS A LAWYER, AND BELIEVES THAT THE CASE REPRESENTS A SERIOUS INFRINGEMENT OF THE RIGHTS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION AS A WHOLE. IN VIEW OF THIS, AND BECAUSE OF THE SUDDEN URGENCY POSED BY THE HUNGER STRIKE, WE ASK YOU TO TAKE URGENT ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PRISONER'S PLEA FOR RELEASE.

E. ACTION RECOMMENDED: TELEGRAMS (NO EXPRESS SERVICE TO PERU). APPEAL TO THE AUTHORITIES (PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER, LABOR MINISTER) FOR SR. ONA MEONO'S IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF HIS HEALTH DETERIORATION CAUSED BY THE HUNGER STRIKE. NOTE THAT HE HAD BEEN RELEASED ON 30 APRIL WITH NO CHARGES HAVING BEEN MADE AGAINST HIM. UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, DETENTION, TEXT, POLICIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE299156
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ASCFULLER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760454-1260
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761257/aaaabxmc.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 JUN 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <04 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING
TAGS: SHUM, MASS, PE
To: LIMA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006